**Sunday 12th May 2024: John 17: 6 – 19 Not Belonging to the World**

*6 ‘I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; 8 for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. 11 And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I protected them in your name that[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17%3A6-19&version=NRSVA#fen-NRSVA-26761a)*] you have given me. I guarded them, and not one of them was lost except the one destined to be lost,[*[*b*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17%3A6-19&version=NRSVA#fen-NRSVA-26761b)*] so that the scripture might be fulfilled.*

*13 But now I am coming to you, and I speak these things in the world so that they may have my joy made complete in themselves.[*[*c*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17%3A6-19&version=NRSVA#fen-NRSVA-26762c)*] 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 15 I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one.[*[*d*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+17%3A6-19&version=NRSVA#fen-NRSVA-26764d)*] 16 They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.*

**Notes**

When Jesus is praying for his disciples, he states he is not asking for us to be taken out of the world, but on the other hand he points out that we don’t belong to it either. This means He wants us to remain in the culture and environment in which we live, but not to take our values from it. We are citizens of heaven, and must take our values from our heavenly citizenship.

This applies to all kinds of things such as honesty, integrity, kindness, how we treat other people, and of course our money. Our culture says hang on to whatever money you have, and do whatever you can to try and get more. And subtly suggests our money is our security and the path to happiness

Whereas heavenly values encourage us not to lay up for ourselves treasures on earth, but to give freely because freely we have received. Focus on where we stand spiritually, not financially.

How can we translate all this into 21st century living with mortgage repayments, fuel and food bills etc? How can we find the right balance between kingdom values and the here and now?

Each of us must resolve this personally. But before we do, we might like to consider Bible passages where people gave generously despite their own poverty, eg the Macedonians (2 Cor 8), the widow’s small coins (Mark 12: 44) and the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17).

Consider also the people we stand in communion with in from the wider Church in other parts of the world, some living in extreme poverty, or those in countries where Christians are persecuted, sometimes giving up their livelihood to follow Jesus. Include a personal story if you have one.

Close by stressing again that how much someone gives is a personal decision, but thank people for considering it prayerfully.

**End**